

March 21, 2010

# Legislative Update 2010



Iowa Department of Human Services

## Special points of interest:

- \* Director Tours Four Oaks
- \* DHS Budget Advances

## Inside this issue:

Boxes Appear	2
DHS Budget Update	2

## DHS Director's Column Will Return Next Week

Director Krogmeier toured the Four Oaks facility in Cedar Rapids on Friday. He met with staff and the Board and learned about the programs and children served at the facility.

Four Oaks serves children with a variety of programs including community and school based programs, prevention programs, residential treatment and shelter programs. Their mission statement is "We assure children become successful adults." According to their website they serve more than 14,000 people annually. They work with troubled children who have a variety of challenges. They provide services on a broad continuum of services and "expect success" with their outcomes.



## Boxes Appear at the Capitol

What does the appearance of packing boxes on the floor of the House and Senate mean? It means that the Legislature is serious about wrapping up business within their 80-day Session. Some are speculating that Session could even adjourn as early as Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>.



## DHS Budget Advances

On March 18 the Iowa House passed the Human Services Budget Bill, HF 2526, on a vote of 53-45. Rep. Lisa Heddens (D-Ames) was the floor manager of the bill. In her comments on the floor she responded to concerns about the one-time use of funds throughout the budget by saying that she was “looking out for Iowans this year” and that she and others would “continue to work on the budget” to address challenges that are sure to arise in the future. Rep. Dave Heaton (R-Mt. Pleasant), former Chair of the Human Services Budget, praised Heddens for doing the best she could under difficult circumstances. He described the initial budget target reductions as the “hardest task of any budget

in sixteen years”. Heddens told her colleagues that she did the best she could with the funds available and strived to “focus on priorities”.

The Heddens amendment adopted on the floor infused another \$5.5 million over the funding levels as passed by the House Appropriations Committee. This additional \$5.5 million brings the total amount of funding restored from the initial budget reduction to about \$19.4 million. While this is very good news and will improve the reduction in staff from an initial 899 to 472 (as passed by the House) there remains a gap in the amount of funding presently available under the legislation and current level of operations.

In addition, there still remains reduction of beds in MHIs and Juvenile facilities totaling 95 (20 are substance abuse beds at Mt. Pleasant).

Director Krogmeier will continue to work with legislators in the Senate where the bill advances next week to make the case for additional funding to close the gap between the bill as passed by the House and the current level of operations.



Iowa Department of Human Services

The Mission of the Iowa Department of Human Services is to help individuals and families achieve safe, stable, self-sufficient, and healthy lives, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the state. We do this by keeping a customer focus, striving for excellence, sound stewardship of state resources, maximizing the use of federal funding and leveraging opportunities, and by working with our public and private partners to achieve results.

Phone: 515-281-4387

E-mail: [jfleming@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:jfleming@dhs.state.ia.us)

[www.dhs.state.ia.us](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us)

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